AMENDMENT

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1-7. Canceled.

8. (Currently Amended) A cable, comprising:

a plurality of color-coded buffer tubes providing a first level of color-coded identification;

color-coded filling material, disposed in each of the color-coded buffer tubes, providing a second level of color-coded identification; and

a plurality of color-coded optical fibers, disposed in each of the color-coded buffer tubes, providing a third level of color-coded identification,

wherein the color-coded filling material is a color-coded gel, and the

~~The cable of claim 5, wherein said~~ color-coded gel comprises a fluorescent colorant.

9. (Currently Amended) A cable, comprising:

a plurality of color-coded buffer tubes providing a first level of color-coded identification;

color-coded filling material, disposed in each of the color-coded buffer tubes, providing a second level of color-coded identification; and

a plurality of color-coded optical fibers, disposed in each of the color-coded buffer tubes, providing a third level of color-coded identification,

~~The cable of claim 2,~~ wherein each optical fiber in the plurality of color-coded fibers is individually identifiable based on a unique three-dimensional color-code defined by color of the each optical fiber, color of the buffer tube in which the each optical fiber is disposed, and color of the filling material of the buffer tube in which the each optical fiber is disposed,

wherein at least two buffer tubes in the plurality of color-coded buffer tubes have a common color,

wherein at least two buffer tubes in the plurality of color-coded buffer tubes are filled with color-coded filling materials that have a common color, and

wherein at least two color-coded optical fibers in plurality of color-coded fibers have a common color.

[This area has been intentionally left blank.]

10. (Currently Amended) A cable, comprising:

a plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes, each comprising circumscribing identifier marks attached thereto at regular length intervals;

a plurality of color-coded optical fibers within each buffer tube of said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes; and

color-coded filling material disposed within each buffer tube of said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes,

wherein ~~a combination of filling material color, optical fiber color, and the circumscribing identifier marks uniquely identifies each optical fiber in the cable.~~

each of the color-coded optical fibers is uniquely identifiable based on a three-dimensional code defined by an identifier mark attached to the buffer tubes, a color of each optical fiber, and a color of the filling material,

wherein at least two buffer tubes in the plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes have common identifier marks,

wherein at least two buffer tubes in the plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes are filled with color-coded filling materials that have a common color, and

wherein at least two color-coded optical fibers in the plurality of color-coded fibers have a common color.

[This area has been intentionally left blank.]

11. (Currently Amended) A system for identifying buffer tubes, comprising:

a plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes, each having an inner wall circumferentially surrounding a respective set of optical fibers;

at regular length intervals, identifying band markings attached to and circumscribing at least one transparent or translucent buffer tube of said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes;

a plurality of color-coded buffer tubes;

non-color-coded filling material disposed within said color-coded buffer tubes; and

gelatinous color-coded filling material [[,]]

~~wherein said gelatinous color-coded filling material is~~ disposed within said transparent or translucent buffer tubes, wherein ~~and homogeneously fills essentially all volume between the respective sets of fibers and the respective inner walls, and wherein said non-color-coded filling material is disposed within said color-coded buffer tubes.~~ each of the buffer tubes is uniquely identifiable based on a three-dimensional code defined by identifying bank markings attached to the buffer tubes, color of the buffer tubes, and color of the filling material,

wherein at least two buffer tube have common identifying band markings,

wherein at least two buffer tube have a common color code, and

wherein at least two buffer tubes are filled with color-coded filling materials that have a common color.

12.-16. Canceled.

[This area has been intentionally left blank.]

17. (Currently Amended) A system for identifying optical fibers, comprising:

a plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes providing an internal volume;

color-coded optical fibers occupying a portion of the internal volume; and

color-coded gelatinous filling material disposed within each of said buffer tubes, wherein each buffer tube contains a different color of filling material, and wherein the color-coded fibers and the color-coded gelatinous filling material occupy essentially all of the internal volume[[.]], and wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises one of pythalocyanime, azo dye, chromium oxide, lake pigment, quinolone, and lithopone.

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18. (Currently Amended) A system for identifying optical fibers, comprising:

a plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes providing an internal volume;

color-coded optical fibers occupying a portion of the internal volume; and

color-coded gelatinous filling material disposed within each of said buffer tubes, wherein each buffer tube contains a different color of filling material, and wherein the color-coded fibers and the color-coded gelatinous filling material occupy essentially all of the internal volume,

~~The system of claim 17,~~ wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises a pearlescent colorant.

19. Canceled.

20. Canceled.

[This area has been intentionally left blank.]

21. (Currently Amended) A method for identifying or managing ~~producing a color-coded~~ optical fibers in a cable, comprising:

color-coding optical fibers;

color-coding gelatinous filling material ~~in response to mixing colorants with gelatinous filling material~~;

~~producing~~ color-[[coded]]coding buffer tubes ~~stock in response to mixing tube colorants with buffer tube material~~;

including the optical fibers and the filling material within the buffer tubes;

~~extruding the color-coded buffer tube stock around first respective groups of the color-coded optical fibers while injecting said color-coded gelatinous filling material into the resulting color-coded buffer tubes;~~

~~extruding transparent or translucent buffer tubes around second respective groups of the color-coded optical fibers; and~~

~~injecting said color-coded gelatinous filling material in respective ones of the extruded transparent or translucent buffer tubes alongside the second respective groups of color-coded optical fibers.~~

establishing a three-dimensional code, for uniquely identifying each respective optical fiber of the optical fibers, each respective opticalfiber defined by a color of the optical fiber, a color of the buffer tube in which the optical fiber is disposed, and a color of the filling material within the buffer tube in which the optical fiber is disposed,

wherein at least two buffer tubes have a common color,

wherein at least two buffer are filled with filling materials having a common color, and

wherein at least two optical fibers have a common color.

22.-30. Canceled.

31. (Currently Amended) A cable, comprising:

a plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes, each comprising circumscribing identifier marks attached thereto at regular length intervals;

a plurality of color-coded optical fibers within each buffer tube of said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes; and

color-coded filling material disposed within each buffer tube of said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes, wherein a combination of filling material color, optical fiber color, and the circumscribing identifier marks uniquely identifies each optical fiber in the cable,

~~The cable of claim 10,~~ wherein the color-coded filling material of least three buffer tubes in said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes have a common color,

wherein at least three buffer tubes in said plurality of transparent or translucent buffer tubes have a common marking code,

wherein at least three color-coded optical fibers in the cable have a common color, and

wherein the color-coded filling material is gelatinous.

[This area has been intentionally left blank.]

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises pythalocyanime.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises azo dye.

34. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises chromium oxide.

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises lake pigment.

36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises quinolone.

37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the gelatinous filling material comprises lithopone.